

INS A) ~~Adhesive tape comprising a woven support of polyester which is tearable by hand~~

The invention relates to adhesive tapes in general, and in particular those used for taping bundles of cable, more particularly in car construction.

An important feature of an adhesive tape is that it should be easily tearable by hand. In fact, for a manual application, the tearability of the adhesive tape makes it possible to do away with ~~the use of a cutting tool, which at the same time limits the risk of injury and the handling time.~~

The tearability of an adhesive tape is linked largely to the support, its compactness, its method of manufacture, but also to the type of fibres used. Each type of fibre is associated with mechanical and physico-chemical properties which define the fields of application of the adhesive tape, in particular in terms of ambient temperature in which the adhesive tape is placed.

Cotton or viscose fabrics, which have currently been used for many years, resist temperatures of 100 to 125°C (thermal class T2 according to the classification adopted in the car industry) and have good manual tearability. Their resistance to abrasion is moderate.

Also used are fabrics of synthetic fibres known in general as polyester fibres. Polyester fabrics bring, by their chemical properties and their appearance, very good resistance to abrasion coupled with good resistance to temperature (150 to 175°C, thermal class T4). Their use is therefore linked to applications where high temperatures are noted (engine bonnets) and where friction against metal parts is possible.

INS B) ~~Manufacturing methods using other techniques than weaving give rise to good tearability by hand with polyester fibres, which makes it possible to retain good properties of temperature resistance (classification T3 in the car). These are techniques of manufacturing non-woven supports of the Maliwatt and Malivlies types. Adhesive tapes using such non-woven supports are described in EP 0668336 A, DE 4442092 A and DE 4442093 A. On the other hand,~~

~~taking into account the manufacturing method, the resistance to abrasion of this type of substrate is lower than that with a woven base.~~

Table 1 summarises the properties of different types of known adhesive tapes formed from synthetic or natural fibres. The class of temperature refers to car classification.

Table 1

Type of support	Woven		Non-woven	
Type of fibres	Viscose or cotton	Polyester	Maliwatt polyester	Malivlies polyester
Class of temp.	T2 (100°C)	T4 (150°C)	T3 (125°C)	T3 (125°C)
Abrasion resistance	**	***	*	*
Tearability	***	no	**	***

* average

** good

*** excellent

The known adhesive tapes with a polyester fabric base are not tearable by hand, unlike certain other products existing on the market. Taking into account the very good properties of polyester fabrics, there is a real demand for this type of product in a tearable form.

~~The object of the invention is to supply an adhesive tape with a woven support with a base of polyester fibres having the property of being tearable by hand.~~

The invention relates in particular to an adhesive tape comprising a woven support from threads formed at least in the majority of polyester fibres, some of which extend in the longitudinal direction of the tape and others of which extend transversely, and an adhesive layer covering at least one face of the support.

The invention provides that the titre of the longitudinal threads per unit width of the tape is lower than the titre of the transverse threads per unit length of the tape and at most equal to 2500 dtex/cm, the longitudinal threads being kept in place in the transverse direction by the adhesive, so as to confer on the tape a transverse tearing stress of less than 10 N.

The titre of the threads per unit width or length is the product of the unit titre of the threads by the number of threads per unit width or length. The lowering of this property for the longitudinal threads, which are normally the warp threads of the fabric forming the support, reduces the transverse tearing stress, i.e. the traction stress which must be exerted on the tape in the longitudinal direction in order to tear it along a transverse line starting from an existing notch. This stress is usually determined by the method AFERA 4007. A value lower than 10 N permits easy tearing by hand.

It is also necessary in this respect to immobilise the longitudinal threads in the transverse direction, without which they move closer together in the direction of one of the sides of the tape when the other side is stressed in traction in order to tear the tape, so that it would be necessary to break a plurality of threads at the same time, which would multiply the force to be exerted in order to achieve breakage. This immobilisation is effected according to the invention by the layer of adhesive covering the woven support, whose contact with each thread is continuous throughout the length thereof, or only has very short interruptions.

Advantageously, the transverse threads are relatively close, i.e. numerous per unit width, which contributes to the stability of the position of the longitudinal threads in the lateral direction.

In order to control the properties of the threads, inter alia the number of elementary filaments composing each of them may be modified.

Optional, complementary or alternative features of the invention are given below:

- The titre of the transverse threads per unit length is between 3000 and 4500 dtex/cm.

INS A4

- ~~The features and advantages of the invention will be disclosed in more detail in the following description, with reference to the attached drawings. ➤~~

Figure 2 shows the breakage of the longitudinal threads of an adhesive tape according to the invention when one tears the same by hand.

By way of non-limiting example, a fabric was made using threads with multiple filaments formed of polyester fibres, dyed continuously black in bulk by a dye resistant to a temperature of 150°C. Weaving is effected by the method of air jet or water jet, using 40 warp threads per centimetre, with a unit titre of 50 dtex, and 22 weft threads per centimetre, of a unit titre of 167 detx. The woven support obtained is covered on one face with a pressure-sensitive adhesive with a rubber base modified by resins, dissolved in toluene, and on the other face with an anti-adhesive varnish applied by the technique known as "reverse roll" (coating by cylinder to cylinder transfer). An adhesive tape obtained by cutting out the support thus covered parallel to the warp threads has excellent temperature resistance (thermal class T4) and good resistance to abrasion.

Figure 1 shows the behaviour of the threads of a tape 1 of polyester fabric not covered with adhesive, and/or whose transverse threads are not very close, when one tries to tear it by hand by applying longitudinal traction to one of its edges 2. The longitudinal threads 3 adjacent to the edge 2 are taut and shift along the transverse threads 4 in the direction of the opposite edge 5, thus approaching one another. A plurality of threads are therefore simultaneously under traction, which makes them difficult to break due to the increase in the number of tex per unit width.

Figure 2, where the same reference numbers are used as in Figure 1 to designate similar elements, shows the behaviour in the same conditions of an adhesive tape 10 according to the invention. The longitudinal threads 3 are immobilised in the transverse direction by the layer of adhesive and by a slight spacing of the transverse threads. They are therefore stressed under traction and break one after another.

Table 2 indicates the transverse tearing force determined by the method AFERA 4007 for the adhesive tape of the example above (A) and, by way of comparison, for the support of this tape when not coated (B), for an adhesive tape with a woven support of rayon and sold by the Applicants under the reference 003 (C), and for an adhesive tape with a non-woven support of polyester which is commercially available (D).

Table 2

Tape	A	B	C	D
Transverse tearing stress (N)	3.73	12.03	6.06	8.93

These results underline the optimum tearability of the adhesive tape according to the invention with respect to both the support not covered with adhesive and known adhesive tapes.

The blackening of the threads in bulk, or other colouring, allows the adhesive tape according to the invention to withstand temperatures up to 150°C without alteration of its appearance.

The adhesive used according to the invention is advantageously a pressure-sensitive adhesive with a rubber or acrylic base in solution in an organic solvent or a dispersion in water, or a pressure-sensitive adhesive without solvent, e.g. of the heat-meltable type, or capable of cross-linking by UV radiation or electron bombardment. The adhesive may be applied by any known technique, e.g. with a scraper on to a cylinder or plane surface, cylinder to cylinder or by means of a die for heat-meltable adhesive.

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